

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

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R 201205Z MAY 74

FM AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 460

INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

C O N F I D E N T I A L L E N I N G R A D 0 4 2 7

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINT:UR

SUBJECT: LENINGRAD LECTURER CHARACTERIZES US DOMESTIC SCENE.

1. BEGIN SUMMARY. A LENINGRAD LECTURER HAS DESCRIBED PRESIDENT NIXON AS BEING IN A "VERY, VERY DIFFICULT POSITION," AND SPECIFICALLY LINKED THE COURSE OF THE PRESENT CONGRESSIONAL IMPEACHMENT HEARINGS TO THE TIMING OF THE PRESIDENTS VISIT TO THE SOVIET UNION IN LATTER HALF OF JUNE. END SUMMARY

2. IN MAY 19 PRESENTATION AT LENINGRADS CENTRAL LECTURE HALL, VETERAN LENINGRAD LECTURER M.D. SOLOVYEV PLACED PORTION OF HIS REMARKS ON US-SOVIET RELATIONS SQUARELY INCONTEXT OF PRESIDENT NIXONS POLITICAL SITUATION AND CONGRESSIONAL IMPEACHMENT HEARINGS. LECTURER SAID THAT CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES EXAMINATION EXPECTED TO LAST FOR SIX OR SEVEN WEEKS, THEREBY COINCIDING WITH EXPECTED PERIOD OF PRESIDENTS VISIT TO SOVIET UNION. LECTURER EMPHASIZED THAT PRESIDENTS VISIT IS CONSIDERED VERY SIGNIFICANT IN FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF US-SOVIET RELATIONS, BUT ADDED THAT THIS IS TREND WHICH WILL CONTINUE REGARDLESS OF INDIVIDUALS. MENTION WAS MADE IN THIS REGARD OF SENATOR KENNEDYS RECENT VISIT TO SOVIET UNION.

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3. PRESIDENT WAS CHARACTERIZED AS BEING IN "VERY, VERY

DIFFICULT POSITION" AS OPPONENTS OF DENTENTE (MILITARY-INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX, ZIONISTS, ETC.) SEEK TO PREVENT FORTH COMING VISIT TO SOVIET UNION. LINKING THIS WITH WATER GATE AFFAIR, LECTURER NOTED THAT DEMANDS FOR PRESIDENTS RESIGNATION FOCUSED PRIMARILY IN WASHINGTON AND PARTICULARLY AMONG REPUBLICANS. HOWEVER, PUBLIC OPINION POLLS SAID TO INDICATE CURRENT MOOD OF AMERICANS. REPUBLICANS DESCRIBED AS SEEKING TO DISTANCE THEMSELVES FROM PRESIDENT BECAUSE OF WATERGATE CONSEQUENCES. DEMOCRATS ON OTHER HAND PICTURED AS OPPOSING RESIGNATION SINCE IT INCREASES THEIR CHANCES IN NOVEMBER ELECTIONS.

VICE PRESIDENT FORD HAS TAKEN DIFFERING POSITIONS IN HIS STATEMENTS, ON OCCASION NOTING POLITICAL HARM OF SITUATION AND OTHER TIMES PRAISING PRESIDENT EXPRESSING CONFIDENCE IN HIS POSITION.

4. COMMENT: LENINGRAD LECTURERS ON INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS HAVE IN PAST TAKEN NOTE OF WATERGATE AND IMPEACHMENT QUESTIONS, BUT THIS IS FIRST TIME HERE THAT THERE HAS BEEN POINTED LINK BETWEEN CURRENT STATE OF CONGRESSIONAL ACTION AND SPECIFIC TIMING OF PRESIDENTS VISIT TO SOVIET UNION. SOLOVYEV MADE HIS REMARKS AS PART OF HIS PREPARED PRESENTATION.

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